2: Becher--113 E-5 (1955-1956) 1960 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Suvára
Pakidái

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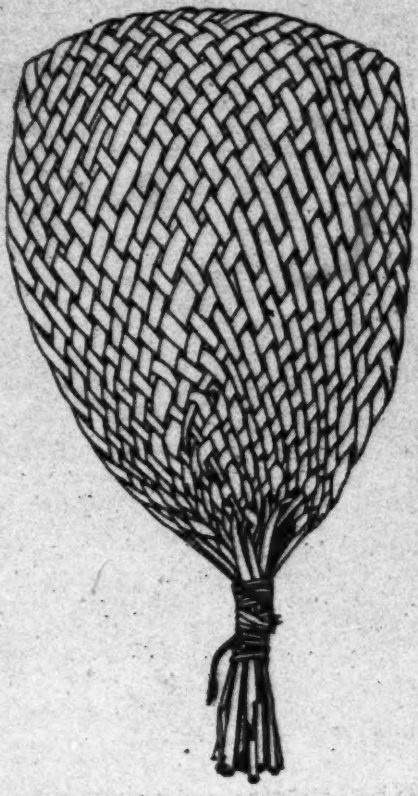

Fig. 22. Plaited fire-fan.

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[413]

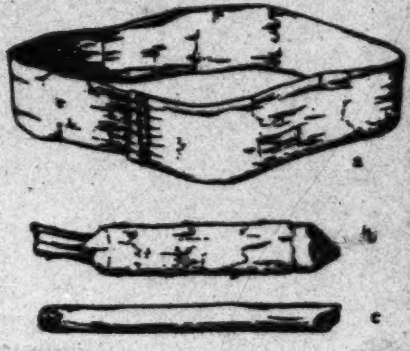

Fig. 23a. Band for carrying children, made of embira tree-bast.

Fig. 23b. Part of an embira trunk with beaten tree-bast which has already been partly pulled off.

Fig. 23c. Bast-beater made of embira wood.

/52 cont./

854 287 [824] [413]

9. Band for Carrying Children

The band for carrying children -- okomakuá -- is made from the bast of an embira tree (Daphnopsis brasiliensis Mart.). For this purpose thin trunks are cut down by the men. Then the women remove the bark and /53/ with a bast beater -- xamotimá -- (a piece of wood 30-40 centimeters long, from the embira tree) beat on the trunk for 1-2 hours. Through this the bast -- uarimaxíke -- becomes loosened, soft, and pliable, so that finally it can be easily peeled off the trunk -- pekehík -- (Fig. 23a-c). Then the two ends are slipped into each other and sewed double with a thread of Bromelia fibers or cotton. The holes are pierced beforehand with the little cutia-tooth knife (see p.117), and then the thread can be drawn through without effort.

[412] 854

The carrying-band is always slung over the right shoulder so that the right hand remains free for work, and it ends at the level of the left hip (Ill. 15), which gives the sitting child additional support if the mother puts its legs around her body.

[171] [184] [714]

This carrying method is very widespread in South America and is also employed by tribes that do not use the carrying-band (292). Among the Xiriána Koch-Grünberg does not seem to

292. See, for example, Koch-Grünberg 1923a, Pl. 45.

have seen such carrying-bands, for he says nothing about them.

10. Receptacles

415/ 824

As receptacles, the fruits of the Bignoniaceae (Crescentia cujete Lin.) and Cucurbitaceae (Cucurbita lagenaria Lin. and Cucurbita idolatrica Lacerda = jamaru), which offer a variety of shapes (ball shape, bottle shape, cucumber shape, and others), are used principally.

[192]

These vessels in general are called -- horotoká --, except for those of the jamaru fruit (Fig. 24), which are called -- nhapotofma.

/62 cont./ The father
844 of the child later hangs it on the tip of a pupunha palm
[824] (Guilielma speciosa Mart.), which is connected with fertility
[842] magic; he buries the afterbirth in the planting. Two confinements which I was able to observe were very easy and quick.
[142] On the lower part of the children's back I could see in each case the grayish-black spots of pigment, the so-called Mongolian spots.

844 Immediately after birth, the mother with her baby took a
846 bath at the nearby riverbank and then lay down in her hammock for one or two hours. After that, with the baby on her arm, she already went back to her customary occupation.

845 If a complication arises during confinement, the chief, who
[622] is at the same time the witch doctor, is fetched.
[756] In contrast to most other Indian tribes, twins are reared.
845 If there should be triplets, which so far has never occurred, one
847 child would have to be killed, for, as they said, the mother has only two breasts. Deformed children are killed and thrown into the river.

852 There are no birth ceremonies, for up to its third year of
851 life the child belongs to the flesh and blood of its mother and
553 is not given a name before this.

● 854 d) Infancy and early childhood

The infant or young child is not left alone for a moment. When the mother attends to her housework or gathers fruits and berries in the forest, she carries it in a carrying band of tree bast on her left hip, so that she has the right hand free for her work.
853 Even at night it sleeps with her in the hammock. The breast is constantly at its disposal, so that it never /63/ thinks of sucking its finger. This may perhaps also explain why these Indians have such a perfect set of teeth. As soon as the teeth start coming in, the child is given tough meat to chew on, in order to facilitate teething. At the same time the long period of nursing, along with abundant sunshine, prevents rickets. After 3-4 months the baby is given supplementary food in the form of cooked, green mealy bananas (Musa paradisiaca normalis), which are prechewed by the mother, or a porridge made out of manioc flat-cakes.

/63 cont./

854 593 It is simply touching to see how lovingly and solicitously every mother treats her child. But the love of the father is no less great. He openly acknowledges the child and clearly shows his feelings of pride and fatherliness (318), though he is otherwise

[114] [191] 318. In contrast to this, Alexander von Humboldt, with reference to the Indians on the Orinoco, writes that fathers do not have any affection for their children (A. von Humboldt, 1860, III, p. 155).

very reserved in his expressions of feeling. When he comes wearily into the communal house after a strenuous hunting expedition or from his field work, he never forgets to devote himself first of all to his little child for a while. He either takes it on his arm and goes walking with it, or he lays it beside him in the hammock. Even during migrations of the tribe he sometimes [858] carries the child for hours. Moreover, he loves a daughter just as much as a son.

854 304 During the first year of life the ear lobes and the lower lips of boys and girls are pierced by the mother with a sharp palm thorn, and, in addition, the girls are given perforations in the corners of the mouth. To prevent the wounds from healing, small wooden rods are stuck in temporarily and moved back and forth 304 frequently.

854 833 When a little girl has completed the first year of life, she is deflowered by the mother with her finger. This procedure is done in preparation for sexual intercourse later on.

114 191 Similar procedures were observed by von Feldner among the Machacarí /Mashacali/ Indians, and he describes them as follows: "Nulla inter illas invenitur virgo, quia mater inde a tenera aetate 854 filiae maxima cum cura omnem vaginae constrictionem 833 ingredimentumque amovere studet hoc quidem modo: manui 304 dextrae imponitur folium arboris in infundibuli formam redactum, et dum index, in partes genitales immissus huc et illud movetur, per infundibulum aqua tepida immittitur" (319). In this connection

319. von Feldner, 1828, II, p. 149, footnote.

2: Becher--136 E-5 (1955-1956) 1960 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Suráya
Pakidái

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/63 cont./
Ploss and Bartels have already observed: "These manipulations probably serve not so much the purpose of cleanliness as preparation for the later sexual functions" (320).

320. Ploss and Bartels, 1927, p. 376.

171
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A custom which is said to prevail in Paraguay should be mentioned in this connection. When a girl is born there, the midwife inserts her finger into the vagina and says: This is a woman (321). Unfortunately, there is no account of the origin

321. Written communication from Montegazza to Ploss (Ploss, 1912, p. 219).

of this custom. It is possible that it was taken over from Indians, because in Paraguay the Indian population is, of course, numerically the largest.

Among most South American tribes for whom there is evidence of an artificial destruction of the hymen, however, chiefly those of the Tukano /Tucano/ and Pano linguistic families, but also some of the Aruaken /Arawak/ and Tupi, it is done for ritualistic purposes at the onset of puberty (322).

322. Fuchs, 1956, pp. 79-81.

Among the Totonaken /Totonac/ in Mexico it is one of the duties of two priests to destroy with their fingers the hymen of female babies 28-29 days after birth. At the same time they ordered the mothers to repeat the defloration six years later with their fingers (323). Strebel regards this procedure as a castigation rite,

323. Krickeberg, 1918-1922, p. 47.

corresponding to the circumcision of male infants, which was also carried out by the priests. "Even the child was to pay its tribute to the gods, /64/ and the fact that the sexual parts were chosen for

Surára
Pakidái

171 /64 cont./
304 this is likewise understandable, considering their significance,
● 854 though the least possible loss of blood may also have been a consideration" (324).

324. Strebel, 1885, p. 13.

854 On the other hand, with regard to the Surára and Pakidái
304 it should be noted that there is no circumcision of boys among them
[833] and the defloration of small girls unequivocally serves for later sexual intercourse; there are no religious motives or hygienic reasons connected with it. Whether this was different in former times neither the chiefs nor older men and women were able to say (325a).

171 325a. It is an interesting fact that among the
304 Itälmen on Kamchatka little girls are de-
854 flowered at a very tender age by their mothers in the same manner as among the Surára and Pakidái and for the same reason (Stellers, 1774, p. 346).

This type of body deformation has been documented for China and Indonesia too. It is done there, however, for hygienic purposes, in order to remove the mucus which gathers in the genitalia (Ploss, 1912, pp. 218/19).

593 It should be mentioned further that all Surára and Pakidái
839 fathers often touch the vulva of their small daughters with the mouth and gently suck on it.

854 If a man has two or more wives, they help each other in
[595] caring for a baby. The grandmother, a sister, or the eldest
[593] daughter are also loving helpers. Infant care, of course, does
854 not require much trouble, for regular baths are unknown. It is
515 only when the crust of dirt is a little too thick that the mother washes it off a bit when she goes to fetch water from the river. The infrequent washing has the advantage that the skin is more
○○○ nearly invulnerable to mosquito bites. If the child's nose is not

Surára
Pakidái

/64 cont./If the child's nose is not clean, the mother carefully takes it between her teeth, presses its contents into her mouth, and spits them out. The women found it most unhygienic that I blew my nose into a handkerchief and carried it with me.

The little Surára and Pakidái learn to walk and talk at the same age as the children of civilization, and they are aided by their parents, siblings, and relatives. The pleasure of the relatives is great and they are overjoyed when the child is able to stand and walk and babble its first words, nápe=mother and hápe=father.

e) Name-giving

After the completion of the third year, a new, important period of life begins. The nursing period is ended, and the child, which hitherto belonged to the flesh and blood of the mother (325b), has become an independent human being.

325b. This idea is very unusual for South American Indians. It should be remembered, however, that among most of the tribes the so-called couvade, the men's childbed, is practiced. Karl von den Steinen, who has examined the psychological basis of this custom, says that in this case the child, whether it be a boy or girl, is "the little father," so to speak, a part of the father, that is, a bit of his body. (K. von den Steinen, 1894, pp. 334 ff.) "The activity of the mother in this connection is compared to that of the soil, which receives the seed." (von Spix and von Martius, 1831, p. 1339.)

has become an independent human being. Now it is also given a name, which is taken from the animal or vegetable kingdom. The name is given to the father, when he offers his prayers in snuff-powder intoxication, by the gigantic animal and plant spirits living on

2: Becher--270 E-5 (1955-1956) 1960 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Surára

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Ill. 8. Construction of the closed Surára maloka at the Cachoeira dos Índios (upper Rio Aracá)

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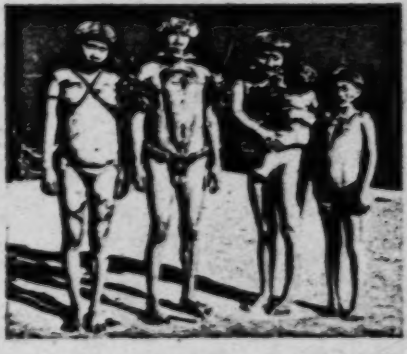
Ill. 9. Hewemao, the Surára chief (adorned for the festival in memory of the dead)



Ill. 10. The Surára chief Hewemão with both of his wives and two children

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Ill. 11. Kurikayawo, the younger brother of the Surára chief

2: Becher-- 272 E-5 (1955-1956) 1960 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

Surára
Shiriana
Karauateri
Pusehaweteri

/7/

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Ill. 15. Surára family. (The woman is a member of the Pusehaweteri and wears the characteristic fringed belt of this tribe)

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Ill. 16. Xiriána woman, Ironasteri, with deforming facial adornment

Ill. 17. Nikeromá, a girl of the hostile Karauateri. (She is a captive of the Surára)

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Ill. 18. Nikeromá (rear view!)

Surára
Pakidái

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●854
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Ill. 29. Pakidái woman with baby in a cotton hammock

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←

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516
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→

Ill. 30. Sleeping place for young dogs ("dog bed")

Ill. 31. Pakidái Indian making fire

4: Wilbert--64 E-4, 5 (1958) 1963 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

Nabudub

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142
516
●854

Nabudub Indians in front of their house an imitation of a Makiritare house.

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352
516
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A Nabudub (Sanemá) nuclear family in front of its house. The hammocks are of vegetal fiber.

Nabudub

4: Wilbert--65 E-4, 5 (1958) 1963 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18 Sanema

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516
854
302

Nabudub (Sanemá) women and children.

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302
291
352
516

Nabudub couple seated on hammocks of cotton made by the woman.

4: Wilbert--73 E-4, 5 (1958) 1963 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema
Makiritare SS 20

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142
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302
854
516

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[344]

Group of Sanemá women and children of the upper Orinoco. In the background the wall of a communal house of the Makiritare Indians.

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

approaching, and barked in astonishment: the Indians made signs, urging us not to shoot them. The otter is an animal with a strong dose of magic in his veins, and to kill him would be asking for prolonged rain. 880

From the Mari we passed into its smallest tributary, the Uaina, and thence into the insignificant Moné—a yellow, stagnant stream, perpetually overgrown, like a green tunnel. Great tree-trunks blocked our passage and the Indians clambered out armed with axes to deal with them. Sometimes a trunk would lie just a few inches under the surface, so that it was impossible to back through it. With the motor at full throttle we would literally skip over such obstacles, taking care to hoist up the outboard just in time to avoid smashing it against the submerged trunk. Each time we rounded a curve the Indians waved their arms and announced the Moné landing ahead; but when, on the second evening of our journey up the Moné, the landing did come into view at last, no one noticed. It was only by pure chance that we didn't overshoot the spot.

Old ruined huts, mouldering and full of spiders, crickets, and beetles, littered the Moné beach. We had to build fresh ones. The others we burned as firewood. The next day we set out through the forest with the first boat. But for all the vast local knowledge of the Sape men, we went up the wrong stream! And after a long day of gruelling effort the canoe ended up in a dry little stream-bed where, so far as we could judge, we were at least two kilometres further up the Kupãpaipà.

Our plight was serious. A boat weighing a thousand pounds couldn't possibly be got down this sandy ditch. Far the better plan would be to turn back and retrace our steps, in spite of the difficulty, and lose two days. But for the moment we decided to do nothing, leaving the craft where she was, wedged between a tree-trunk and a mudbank.

The *Pirata*, without the misleading help of the Sape guides, made her way triumphantly straight to the right beach without any loss of time at all. 123*

While we were coming back from the Kupãpaipà to the hut on the Moné the Sape men heard something in the distance which alarmed them: other Indians were approaching from the direction of the Mari. We very soon met them. They were hauling a little canoe, the common small boat of Guiana known as a *curiara*. It was a flimsy affair, which slipped along over the poles we had laid down for our own boat as if it was on water. Sitting in it was a girl with a child like some horrible spider clinging to her back. The boy was a mere [501] [854]

[pp. 1-24 not processed]

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

him outside the range of the magic influence which had reduced him to such a hideous condition. But evidently they had only escaped the Samatari magic to fall straight into another, which was too much for the sick child. He died, sacrificed in a duel between two magic powers.

VI

The great 'provisioning-march' of the Samatari now began. We went along with them. We were prisoners, we were guests, we were tolerated visitors—a bit of everything. The main body, with the women and children, led the way along a track that was years old and had been opened up again the day before by the younger members of the tribe, who possessed the one metal weapon used by the Samatari: a piece of a knife-blade stuck into a stick and firmly bound with bark soaked in vegetable gum. What story could this scrap of steel have told when it finally reached the headwaters of the Aracosa!

The track was by no means straight, but for all its meanderings led vaguely towards the south-east. It lay for the most part through the dense thickets of fruit-bearing trees, which probably harboured other sorts of foodstuffs of which we knew nothing. The main body arrived to find that the young men had already picked nuts and fruit of all kinds and made piles of them at the foot of the trees. All the women had to do was take them up.

When meat of any sort is found and killed on these occasions, a couple of youngsters stay behind with it. They sling a hammock and light a fire and watch while it is slowly smoking on the spit. When the women come up, they pull off pieces of the flesh, put them into the rough hampers they carry on their shoulders and go on with the march, their babies jogging up and down on their backs, tied there with a strap made of bark. Some, like peripatetic vestal virgins, take fire with them, in the form of glowing brands, blowing on them as they go along lest the embers should grow cold. Thus the march of the Samatari leaves a trail of nutshells, rinds, ash, and little bits of charcoal. It suggests not so much an ordinary nomadic people on the move but rather a very special tribe composed of itinerant cooks.

With evening, or strictly speaking some time before the end of the afternoon, we found ourselves in a vast clearing where all the small plants, shrubs, bushes and grass had been cut away and swept and raked aside. All round this

/455 cont./

283 Cotton is spun by means of a hand spindle. This thread is then twisted into three-thread cords.

Various fibers of bark are twisted to make bowstrings or fishing lines. These same fibers of bark are frequently plaited to make hammock strings.

The fiber of a certain plant similar to the pineapple is also extracted and twisted, producing a very tough cord.

284 The knots which the Guaika /Waica/ make are very simple and practical. The timber hitch is employed in all cases in [411] which a flexible cord is used. This includes the stringing of the [352] bows. The hammock is hung using a timber slipknot. This knot is made in such a way that it can be instantly untied by a pull. The square knot is used to join the ends of two cords. In the accompanying Fig. 2, we show drawings of the three knots concerned.

289 /456/ A band of bark is made for carrying children. First
● 854 they obtain a stick of the right size, which is beaten with another stick for several days. The scaly outer bark comes off. Finally, the smaller end of the cylindrical bark is inserted into the larger end (of greater diameter), and the two are then firmly sewed together. The result is a band or strip without rough or cutting edges, which remains flexible and useful for many months.

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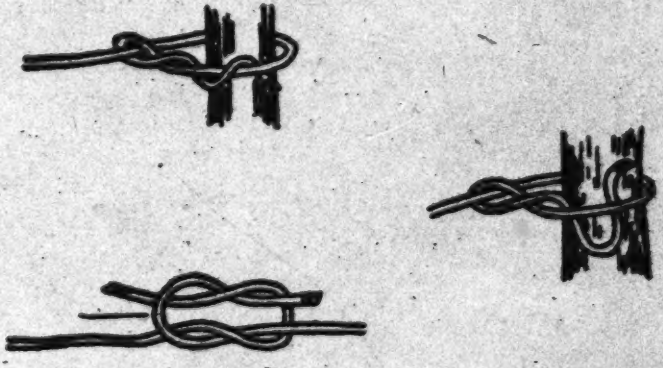

/Fig. 2/

7: Barker--61 M-5 (ca. 1951-1953) 1953 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Waica

Plate I

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The primitive huts of the Guaika, roof-on-posts type, lined up in a broad circle, have their fronts toward the great central patio free of vegetation. (Photo. by the author.)

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● 854

Guaika women with their babies. Note the manner of sitting, in El Platanal. (Photo. by the author.)

78h

The women carry great weights hanging from the head and shoulders. El Platanal. (Photo. by the author.)

A Guaika wom
or strap of bark

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B54

7: Barker--62 M-5 (ca. 1951-1959) 1953 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

Plate II

Waica

n carrying her child by means of a band
El Platanal. (Photo. by the author.)

111 Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

115

other men, both of whom discarded her because of her infidelity. Kaobawä had one daughter by her; she is being raised by his brother.

Kaobawä's eldest wife, Bahimi, is about thirty-five years old. She is his first cross-cousin (see Glossary). Bahimi was pregnant when I began my fieldwork, but she killed the new baby, a boy, at birth, explaining tearfully that it would have competed with Ariwari, her nursing son, for milk. Rather than expose Ariwari to the dangers and uncertainty of an early weaning, she killed the new child instead. By Yanomamö standards, she and Kaobawä have a very tranquil household. He only beats her once in a while, and never very hard. She never has affairs with other men.

Kaobawä is quiet, intense, wise, and unobtrusive. He leads more by example than by threats and coercion. He can afford to be this way as he established his reputation

Fig. 1-4. Kaomishima, Kaobawä's youngest wife, playing with her son, who is holding a tree frog.

most common way for a child's soul to escape is to leave by way of the mouth when the child cries. Thus, mothers are quick to hush a bawling baby in order to prevent its soul from escaping. The child's soul can be recovered by sweeping the ground in the vicinity where it most probably escaped, calling for it while sweeping the area with a particular kind of branch. I once helped gather up the soul of a sick child in this fashion, luring it back into the sick baby. One of the contributions I made, in addition to helping with the calling and sweeping, was a dose of medicine for the child's diarrhea. A consequence of this set of attitudes about the vulnerability of children is that much of the village's activity with respect to shamanism and curing is directed toward the children.

RELATIVES BY BLOOD AND BY MARRIAGE Many forms of interpersonal behavior stem largely from the social roles implied in the kinship system. To be sure, some kinship behavior reflects the two distinctions of age and sex discussed above, for the terminology of kinship itself employs discriminations of this kind. For example, there are terms to distinguish older siblings from younger siblings and terms used by members of one sex only in reference to those of the opposite sex.

The relationship between kinship terms and biological parentage is not the same in the Yąnomamö language as it is in our own. As was shown in the first section of this chapter, people may stand in a child relationship to a number of individuals; that is, it is possible to have multiple "mothers" and "fathers" in Yąnomamö society. The term for mother and father conveys as much of a social as a biological relationship between individuals, and in the daily activities of the Yąnomamö it is the social implications of kinship roles that are most important.

What is implied in the kinship roles can best be seen in the way the kinship terms themselves are formed. All primary kinship terms take the ending *"-mou"* when used to describe the relationship between individuals. Thus, *osheya* means "my younger sibling," but *oshemou* means that individual X *behaves* toward individual Y *as a younger sibling*. This ending, *-mou*, also occurs in nonkinship usage to express "a way of behaving," "to execute a particular activity in a specified manner," or "to perform the activity that is implied by the word to which *-mou* is affixed." For example, *oko* means fresh-water crab and *okomou* means "to go hunting for crabs"; *howashi* means "a mischievous white monkey" and *howashimou* means "to act mischievously, to monkey around"; *nowa naba* means "enemy," and *nowa nabamou* means "to become an enemy by behaving objectionably"; *waiteri* means "fierce" and *waiterimou* means "to behave ferociously."

Whenever I would ask the Yąnomamö a question such as, "What do you call Kąobawä?" the answers would always be in the form of a kinship term to which *"-mou"* was affixed, but rarely in the form "I say such-and-such to him." Calling an individual by a specific term is, however, implied in the "way of behaving" toward that individual. But despite the fact that the Yąnomamö can say, literally, "I call him father" (*kama kä iba, haya ya kuu*), they invariably say *"ya hǫ̈mou"*—"I behave toward him as a child."[20] Thus, they express their relationships to others in terms of *ways of behavior*. Each kinship category implies a set of these behavioral norms, and one's social life in the community is established with respect to all other individuals by the kinship terminology employed in each particular case.

[20] Although the word *hǫ̈* translates literally as "father," the expression *ya hǫ̈mou* can best be understood with the translation given above.